treating doctors. Routine blood, urine and X-ray investigations are normally done on the same or next day. However, for specialized investigations like Contrast X-rays, CT Scan, Bone Scan, MRI, TMT, Muga, Echo etc., the patients are given dates depending upon availability of time. For hospitalized in-patients and emergency patients the investigations are done at AIIMS on the same day at the earliest. In other Central Government hospitals in the capital routine medical tests including X-ray are normally done on the same day. However, specialized tests and radiological investigations are conducted with a reasonable period of patient's preparation.

Report on use of off-label drugs

566. SHRI RÂMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have set up an Expert Group comprising doctors and pharmacologists in connection with the use of off-label drugs;

(b) if so, whether the Group has submitted its Report;

(c) what are the recommendations made by the Group;

(d) whether the Group has identified any drugs which are off-label to be used by doctors; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (e) Matters concerning off-label use of drugs *i.e.* use of a drug by a medical practitioner for indication, dosage form, dose regimen or other use parameter not mentioned in the approved labelling of drug, was examined by a group of experts under the Chairmanship of Dr. R. Sambashivarao, Addl. DG, Dt. GHS. The Expert Group recognized the fact of off-level use of drugs by individual doctors based on their experiences. They also noted that such use is not within the ambit of

drugs regulatory framework. The expert group suggested that provisions of Drugs and Cosmetics Rules be amended to incorporate relevant provisions for off-label use of drugs under certain conditions, by medical practitioners for an indication not formally approved for those drugs.

Health schemes and programmes in Himachal Pradesh

†567. SHRI SURESH BHARDWAJ: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of Centrally-sponsored health schemes and programmes in Himachal Pradesh during the last three years;

(b) the details of funds sanctioned for these schemes and the amount spent thereon;

(c) whether any assessment has been made about the success of these schemes; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) The major Centrally-sponsored schemes being implemented in the State during the last three years relate to the disease control programmes of Malaria, TB, Leprosy, AIDS and Blindness.

(b) Details of the funds sanctioned for the above schemes and the amount spent are given in the Statement (*See* below).

(c) and (d) The schemes are regularly being assessed and monitored through periodic reports, meetings and field visits by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. Apart from the Ministry's assessment of the schemes, implementation of the programmes is also assessed and evaluated by missions from donor agencies and independent agencies. Findings of these assessments reveal that implementation of TB programme is satisfactory and the revised strategy needs to be expanded; decline in prevalence rate of leprosy as also satisfactory drug position under this programme and low transmission of vector borne disease.

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.